

## **Prayer Transformation Ministries Email Newsletter – Teaching for 6/6/07**

### **How Much Do You Want to Die?**

*How much do you want to die?* may seem an abrupt and shocking question. Jackson Senyonga, a Ugandan pastor who has witnessed transformation in his country, puts it more bluntly: “God wants to kill you!”

This is not a “death wish” in a physical sense. Rather, it is the spiritual reality of Galatians 2:20: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

During one of the morning prayer times connected with the South Minneapolis *Divine Experiment*, a participant stood up and testified, “My life is not mine anymore.” This person has spent the better part of 21 days seeking the Lord, repenting of all known sin, and fasting with the desire for God’s manifest presence to be known in his life and community. In that “death to self” process, God brought him to complete surrender of his life.

“How much do you want to die?” has to do with your willingness to die to every area of your life so that Christ can live His life through you. Each of us needs to learn various depths of death in order to live a “crucified life.” Some of us need to die more than others!

### **Levels of Dying**

As we begin this journey of the crucified life, we may feel pretty good about giving up many fleshly habits from our old way of life. We can perhaps identify specific changes that bring freedom from immoral behavior or unholy habits. We might feel like we have come a long way spiritually because we have died to some of the greater offenses and hurts we have received from others, including Christians. But there is much more that needs to be nailed to the cross.

The Apostle Paul said “I die daily.” Certainly he already lived a crucified life, but perhaps he was referring to the realities of those “little issues” that rose up during the course of his day. The little issues that we face day in and day out are continually challenging our flesh. The impatience with traffic, the feeling of irritation at the habits of another, the subtle ways that we attract attention to ourselves, the way we demand our ideas and desires be known, even the ways we try to build up our own reputations—these are myriads of ways that flesh arises in our lives.

These are God’s opportunities. When Jackson says “God wants to kill you,” he means that God offends the mind to reveal the heart—for our own good! When our true heart is revealed, those are times that we can cooperate with the Holy Spirit and die to those

fleshly desires, cravings, and ambitions. This kind of death gets down to the root issues of our sin. But God will only go as deep as we allow Him, so the question remains, *how much do you want to die?*

### **How Do We Die?**

We live in a culture where we are taught to indulge ourselves, compete with others, and ensure our own success and happiness. These values may well have been ingrained in us early on as we grew up in a self-indulgent society. So how do we learn to die to those things that are so woven into the fabric of our lives?

When such issues and attitudes surface in our lives, we must **acknowledge** that they have at their root our own flesh. There is no blame to be made outside of ourselves. What is of the flesh is opposed to the life of the Holy Spirit within us, so we need to acknowledge and deal with the conflict. There is a war going on between flesh and the Spirit life (Romans 7)!

Once we have recognized and acknowledged this part of our fleshly nature that is opposing the rule of the Spirit, we must take **responsibility and confess it**. We cannot conveniently ignore it or command it to be gone if there is no **true confession and repentance**. We need a truth encounter with this part of us that is actively opposing the work of God in our lives.

Upon recognizing that this is *our problem* and a part of our own flesh—and having confessed and repented of its activity in our lives—we can then come to a place of renouncing its power over us. We can reject these fleshly impulses, declaring that we no longer welcome, embrace, or tolerate these things in our lives. Then we can ask the **Holy Spirit to fill that place** with His power and transform that part of us into the character of Christ. More of the life of Christ will be lived out through us in deeper ways as we go through this process—and that is the greatest weapon we have in this daily war.

Now watch out! Today you will encounter those areas in your life that will challenge how much you are truly desperate for Him—or willing to settle back into a comfortable fleshly life. In those moments, you will need to answer the question of how much you are willing to die.